Chord Noodling Improvisation

Remember from our study of the major scale that for every key there is a certain set of notes that complement each other, as well as a certain set of chords? Have you ever wanted to know how a guitar player can play notes effortlessly all over the guitar neck and the notes that they choose, always sound good? Have you ever noticed that your favorite guitar players don't just play "standard" chords, but in fact embellish and even play melodies over chord progressions, while they are holding chords?

I like to call this "chord noodling," meaning you are "noodling" around with different notes while still playing the chords. It's a SUPER cool way of making a standard chord progression sound PRO.

THAT is where the following fretboard noodling maps REALLY come in handy! Let's say you are playing a song in the key of G and the chords are G, C, E- and D. You could use the Chord Noodling Map in the key of G, to show you EXACTLY all the safe notes that you could "noodle" with, while playing that chord progression.

So here is an exercise for you. If you know that a song is in one of the keys represented in the following maps, try to come up with an arrangement using some notes outside of the chord, but still in the key as represented by the map. If you DON'T know the key, use the Number System Chart in this book to identify what key the song is in by matching your chords with the appropriate key. For instance, if your progression is G, C, E- and D, then your song is most likely in the key of G and you would use the G map. If your chord progression is C, A-, F and G, then the song is most likely in the key of C and you would use the C map. Get it? Note: Don't get distracted by if the song needs a capo or not. If you are using a capo and playing the above chords, you will still use the corresponding map.

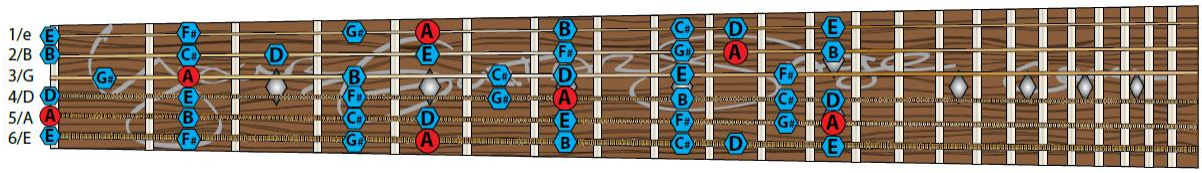
Check out these videos, if you still need help:

Guitar Chord Noodling Part 1
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FflbeCSPAMw

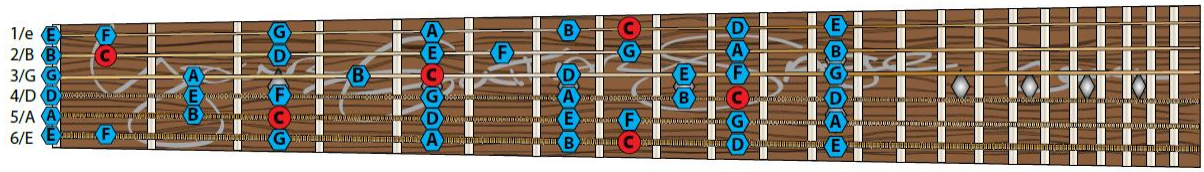
Guitar Chord Noodling Part 2
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rZLtv-iN_Us

Chord Noodling Maps in Open Major Keys

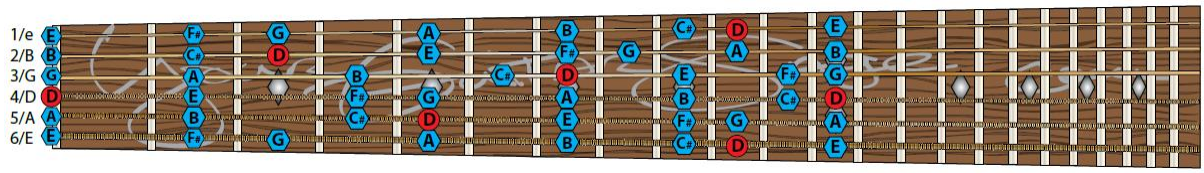
Key of A



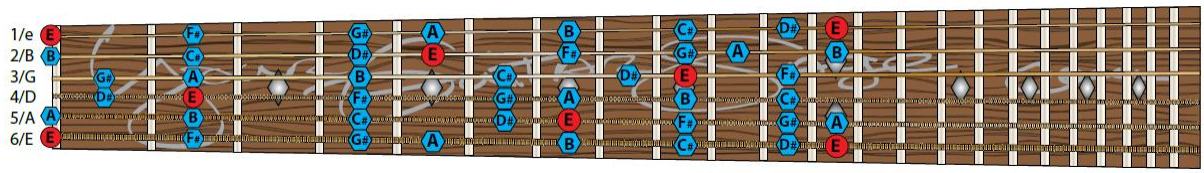
Key of C



Key of D



Key of E



Key of G